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THE OBSERVATOR.

Remarks on the Inſtructions given by the Electors of the County of Bucks, *to the Knights of the Shire, whom they have choſen to repreſent them in the next Parliament. Thoſe Inſtructions defended, and fit to be imitated by others.*

From Wednesday, May 26. to Saturday, May 29. 1708.

Country-m. I Want your Opinion, Maſter, of the Inſtructions which the Electors of *Buckinghamſhire* have given to Sir *Edmund Denton*, Bar. and *Richard Hambden*, Eſq; whom they have choſen to repreſent that County next Parliament.

Obſ. The Inſtructions ſpeak for themſelves, *Roger*, and argue thoſe who gave them, to have a due Senſe of their own Right, and of thoſe of the whole united Nation. Thoſe brave Electors ſhew themſelves to be Whigs of the right Stamp; and the Gentlemen who have accepted their Inſtructions, have juſtly entitl'd themſelves to the ſame Character. It has been the Happineſs of that County, *Roger*, to have been, for a long Time, among the firſt Aſſerters of *Magna Charta*; and to have noted Families, which, from one Generation to another, have been true to the Intereſt of their Country; and not only acted, but ſuffer'd for it.

Country-m. I remember it very well, Maſter; and am glad, that this County is ſtill able to boaſt of the nobleſt and braveſt Patriots of the Nation; tho', by the Deſign of ſome, and the Ignorance of others, they may go at preſent under different Names and Characters; therefore I find it every Day to be a Rule more and more neceſſary, to judge of the Tree by its Fruits. But pray, Maſter, give me your Thoughts of the Particulars of their Inſtructions.

Obſ. Their firſt Inſtruction, *Roger*, 'To take Care, 'that the Strength and Diſcipline of the Navy may 'be reſtor'd; and by that Means, the Trade of the 'united Kingdom effectually encourag'd and prote-'cted, beſpeaks them to be Men, who conſider the State of the Nation, who know what is principally wanting, and who know the proper Way of having thoſe Wants ſupply'd. Under-ſpur-leathers, and ſuch as they can influence, have been for Addreſſes of Thanks to palliate juſt Cauſes of Complaint; but our Friends in *Buckinghamſhire* act a more loyal and national Part; they are not for impoſing upon the Sovereign, nor for putting Shams upon the Subject, but plainly point out what we want, and take a right Method to have it obtain'd. Whatever others have done, they have not forgot the Addreſſes of the Lords and Commons about former Miſmanagments of our Fleet, and the Decay of our Trade; and therefore expreſs their Deſires, that both may be prevented in Time to come. Nor are they of ſuch narrow Spirits, as to confine their Affection and Care to a Corner, but ſhew themſelves equally concern'd for the Welfare of the whole united Kingdom. And I wiſh, *Roger*, from my Heart, that the Poſture of Affairs Abroad, were ſuch, as might not give us juſt Cauſe to believe, that we muſt make more Uſe of our Fleet, than hitherto we have done, ere the War be brought to a happy Concluſion; therefore I think thoſe Gentlemen are altogether in the Right, to deſire, that the Strength and Diſcipline of the Navy may be reſtor'd.

Country-m. Aye, Maſter, and by the Affidavit I brought you laſt Day, I think it appears to be abſolutely neceſſary, that the Diſcipline of the Army ſhould be likewiſe taken Care of; for if Military Men be not puniſh'd in an exemplary Manner, whenever they affront the Civil Power, the Authority of the Sovereign, and the Liberties of the Subject, may ſoon be precarious. We have formerly taken Notice, that the Inſolence of *Oliver*, and his Military Men, not being check'd in Time, they came to ſuch a Head at laſt, as to deſtroy both King and Parliament; and when King *Charles* and King *James* the II. had Standing-Armies, they trampl'd upon our *Magna Charta*, and fundamental Laws: Therefore 'tis the Concern of our Parliaments, whoſe Buſineſs it is to keep the Ballance even betwixt the Sovereign and Subject, and to prevent their incroaching one upon another, to take Care, that as the Army ſhould want nothing which is neceſſary for carrying on the War, that at the ſame Time, the Officers and Soldiers ſhould know, they are Servants, and not Maſters, and that the Greateſt of them ought to pay a Deference to the meaneſt Civil Officer, when employ'd under her Majeſty in any Branch of the Executive Power.

Obſ. You ſay very well, *Roger*; for 'tis an intollerable Abuſe and Affront upon the Queen, when Men of the Sword offer to inſult the loweſt Miniſter of Juſtice, in the Execution of their Office. The Inſtance you gave me laſt Day, of the barbarous Treatment of the Gentleman belonging to the Court of *Chancery*, for ſerving a *Subpœna* upon a Captain, is ſuch as no civiliz'd Nation ought to let go unpuniſh'd; and I doubt not, but thoſe concern'd, will meet with a proper Reward, when the Matter is brought into *Weſtminſter-Hall*.

Country-m. Pray, Maſter, give me your Opinion of the ſecond Inſtruction of our Friends, the Electors of *Bucks*?

Obſ. Their ſecond Inſtruction, *Roger*, 'That they 'ſhould require an exact Account how all the pub-'lick Money is diſpos'd, that what is pay'd with 'ſo much Chearfulneſs, tho' under ſo many Diffi-'culties, may appear to be duly apply'd, is ſo like good Subjects, and true Patriots, that it can never be enough commended: Therefore I hope, *Roger*, the Example will be follow'd by other Counties and Burroughs, ſo as a Commiſſion of Accompts may be reviv'd, or ſuch other Methods taken, as the Parliament, with her Majeſty's Concurrence, ſhall think fit, to prevent the Embezzlement of publick Money, or accompting for it by dark Articles, that thoſe who furniſh it, cannot underſtand. I told you before, *Roger*, that our Anceſtors have frequently, in Parliament, appointed Commiſſioners of their own Number, and the chief Magiſtrates of *London*, or others, to receive and diſburſe the publick Money, and to accompt to them for it, that they might be ſure it was apply'd to the Ends for which it was given. Had this Method been duly obſerv'd, *Roger*, ſome Mens Eſtates, would never, like Muſhrooms, have grown to ſo monſterous a Bulk, in ſo little a Time: Therefore, *Roger*, I can ſee no Reaſon, why it may not be as proper ſtill, as formerly, to adviſe our Repreſentatives to make a ſtrict Enquiry into the Diſpoſal of publick Money; and in order to this, to draw up an Accompt in five Columns, as an ingenious Author formerly adviſ'd. The 1ſt, *to contain the Names of ſuch as they have Reaſon to ſuſpect have defrauded the Publick.* The 2d, *the reputed Value of their Eſtates, when they were firſt employ'd by the Government.* The 3d, *the preſent reputed Value of their Eſtates.* The 4th, *what they could honeſtly get by their Offices and Imployments.* The 5th, *what they have got more than the Income of their Offices.*

Coun-

Country-m. But 'twill be objected, Master, that this is an Entrenchment upon the Executive Power; and that there's no Need of it, since her Majesty has promis'd, that the Money given by the Nation, shall be apply'd to the Uses 'tis given for.

Obj. Pray don't mistake me, *Roger*; I am always for keeping clear Marches betwixt the Legislature and Executive Power; therefore I propose nothing of this to be done, without her Majesty's Concurrence; but since the Parliament is her great Council, they are most proper to judge when such a Method is necessary, and to advise what Persons are fittest for such a Trust. 'Tis their Right, by our Constitution, to enquire into the Administration, and to assist the Sovereign on all urgent Occasions: For let Princes be ever so diligent or capable, 'tis impossible for them to audit the publick Accompts, without Help; and I know none fitter to assist, or that will do it with more Faithfulness, than the Representatives of the People who give it. It was one of the Glories of Queen *Elizabeth*'s Reign, that she took a particular Care to have the publick Money duly apply'd; and that once she order'd the Money to be return'd again to the People, when the publick Occasion that requir'd it, was over.

Country-m. You have fully satisfy'd me, Master; and I hope your Answer will satisfy others.

Obj. The People of *England* always thought those Parliaments glorious, *Roger*, that when they found a War necessary, took Care to see, that the Camp and Fleet was not starv'd, to fatten Courtiers, that would not endure poor Soldiers and Sailors, who undergo the greatest Hardships, to be reduc'd to Necessity for Want of their Pay, while so many got Estates only by telling of Money, and with no other Labour, but that of their Fingers; who would not suffer Admirals, or those employ'd under 'em, to turn *Leviathans*, to make a Pastime of their Places, and devour the poor Sea-mens Wages; who would curb the avaritious Temper of such Men, as could not be content with the profitable Income of the greatest Offices in *England*, without the unconscionable Supplement of Grants and Pensions; and in a Word, who took Care, that Upstarts should not abound in Wealth and Pleasure, while the rest of the Nation was poor and languishing.

Country-m. I think the People had as good Reason to account such Parliaments glorious, Master, as to account those infamous, who, for the Sake of Pensions and Places, did at any Time betray their Liberties, or suffer'd such as did so, to pass unpunish'd. To this Purpose, I remember a very fit Sentence in the Lord Bishop of *Sarum*'s six Papers, pag. 5. 'What Infamy (says his Lordship) will it lay 'upon the Name of an *English* Parliament, if in'stead of calling those Betrayers of their Country 'to an Account, they should go, by an After-game, 'to confirm what these Fellows have done.

Obj. His Lordship said very well, *Roger*. I remember the Papers, they were publish'd upon the Revolution, when our Whigs were full-freighted with true Notions of Liberty; which, by their Practice, too too many of 'em seem to have forgot since: But Thanks to our Friends in *Buckinghamshire*, they keep to the old honest Whig-Principles; and 'tis none of their Fault, if others don't do the same.

Country-m. I hope, Master, now that we are like to have a Whig-Parliament, the old Principles of Liberty will be re-asserted, and receive new Life.

Obj. 'Tis the Concern of Parliaments, *Roger*, as well as of private Persons, to take Care how they proceed, if they would leave a good Reputation to Posterity; especially now, that the Names of all the Members are annually printed; for the People will generally have a Regard to such Families, as have been noted for Patriots; as is plain from the Instance of the County of *Bucks*. Besides, *Roger*, 'tis plain from our History, that the Memory of several Parliaments has been convey'd to Posterity with very ugly Epithets; as that of King *Charles* the II's Pensioner-Parliament of late; a List of which Pensioners, with their Pensions and Characters, such as their Posterity may justly be asham'd of, was formerly publish'd in Print. We must adjourn our farther Remarks on the *Buckinghamshire* Instructions, 'till our next, *Roger*.

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